



Christian Order

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PLEASE NOTE

Christian Order is not published in July and August. This June/July number appears in the first week of June. The August/September number will appear in the first week of September.

Grateful thanks are extended to the very many readers who have renewed their subscriptions so promptly and so generously these past months. This has proved an enormous help. Will the few whose subscriptions are still due be so kind, please, as to send them in without delay? I would be most grateful if they would do so.

Paul Crane, S.J.

Cum Permissu Superiorum

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If You Change Your Address :

Please let us know two or three weeks ahead if possible and please send us both new and old addresses. Thank you.

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Paul Crane SJ

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Decadence

THE EDITOR

EVER since I can remember, California has had something of a name as a somewhat dotty progenitor of barmy causes. Crazy cults sprout there like flowers in spring or the scrub fires which periodically devastate large tracks of its once lovely hinterland and destroy in their devouring stride the vulgar and costly homes of the rich with which it is littered.

Only the other day, I was reading a piece on Palm Springs which—quite unintentionally, I am sure—revealed it to me as a piece of contrived and decadent awfulness, the like of which need only be experienced to be believed. All of which means that, so far as California is concerned, I have had it; which strikes me as a pity, for its climate must surely be one of the best in the world and, before man got in and bashed its lovely face about, it must have been a place of great beauty. I could see that when I first went there in 1947. It was very beautiful, even then; in places quite breath-taking. Since then, man has let loose his work of devastation on its loveliness. Since then, I have seen the progressive deterioration of this once beautiful State each time I have been there—not at regular intervals, but with the gap between visits long enough to bring home to me the mess that men were making of the place. So much so, that I don't want to go there any more.

These thoughts came to my mind as I read in the papers earlier this year of California's latest crack-pot caper. It takes expression in the obscenity of contrived selective mating, with a view to the production of supposedly supermen. My mind went back when I read of this to Himmler's stud farms in the closing months of World War II, where selected Aryan types from his brutal SS — those horrible blonde young killers—were bedded down with girls drawn from the same stock, with a view to the production of an Aryan super-race. On the one hand, this degrading madness. On the other, that of the death camps; the non-Aryans —Jews, gypsies and the rest—herded shuffling into the gas chambers, their bodies then burnt by the thousand each day. Social engineering in aid of an Aryan master-race. Now, the same in California. In the words of the *Daily Telegraph* (13/3/80), which should have known better than make a headline of this degrading nastiness: "Five Nobel prize-winners were reported yesterday to have given sperm so that specially-selected women can be artificially inseminated in the hope of producing exceptionally bright children". Meanwhile, in California and throughout the States, babies are being butchered in the womb by the thousand each day. The parallel is close enough to be considered complete.

This clinically obscene ugliness, which makes a mockery of the loveliness of body and soul and consigns the beauty and tender mystery of love between boy and girl to the trashcan, rests on two utterly uproven assumptions. The first is that intelligence—intellectual ability—is primarily the product of heredity; the second that moral goodness—character, if you like—is coterminous with and proportionate to intellectual capacity. This double assumption adds up to a vast nonsense, as does also the further inexcusable confusion which identifies wisdom with knowledge and supposes, in consequence, that an American High School kid has more to offer the world than a peasant farmer, say, who can neither read nor write. Than this, absurdity can go no further. "*Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat*"; whom the gods would destroy, they first send mad. Small wonder that California is said to be due any time for its next earthquake. As things are now in that State, it would seem to offer the only appropriate remedy.

Father James V. Schall, S.J. of Georgetown University, Washington, USA, sets down in this article the reflections that came to him in the wake of Pope John Paul's visit to the United States. Acknowledgements to *Social Order*.

Against the Tide

JOHN PAUL II AND OUR TIMES

JAMES V. SCHALL, S.J.

FOR Hugh Sidey of *Time*, "there seemed something about the man that suggests that if he was given the 82nd Airborne Division, he would know what to do with it. He might take away all its guns, but when he got through talking to the men, they would take Cuba with their prayer-books" (*The Washington Star*, October 7, 1979).

For James Reston of *The New York Times*, who wrote several articles on him, "we haven't had a visitor like the Pope in America in years. For a little while, he made us think, and even hope; and these days round here, that's quite an achievement" (October 7, 1979).

The True Modern

And from the United States Senate, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, in a brilliant philosophical reflection, wrote: "I have given him my heart, and the reader should know this and especially why. He is the first Pope with a wholly 20th century intellectual formation, and perhaps the first person in this century to come to institutional eminence having grappled with, possibly mastered, the principal philosophical question of this century, which is the question of totalitarianism" ("The Pope and Modern Man", *The Washington Post*, Supplement, October 6, 1979, p. 29). Moynihan went on to point out that Catholics in America were traditionally considered to be "pre-modern" by American secular standards, so that the uniqueness of Karol Wojtyla is that, by his personalist philosophy, rooted in actual experience,

and in the Scriptural idea of the unique created dignity of each separate, special person, he, the Pope, is the true modern in contrast to whom the secular American liberal is suddenly "pre-modern", inexperienced and unreflective about the true realities of this century.

If a liberal is someone who uniquely stands against the masses, against the actual practices and ideals of his time, John Paul II is indeed almost the last liberal. That ideas characteristic of him are also rooted in the classics, in Augustine and Aquinas, does not change this uniquely open and free conception of him. We Catholics have long ago given up really thinking in our own tradition which he has suddenly rediscovered in the experience of his nation, our time.

Leopold Tyrmand, in *The Wall Street Journal*, put it well: "The Church in Poland responded to the communist political, social, cultural and administrative onslaught by resorting to its neglected, almost forgotten weapon: intellectual riches . . . Karol Wojtyla was one of the architects of this intellectualization strategy. He is a neo-Thomist scholar . . . Thomas lived in a period when new scientific revelations were seen to be challenging the laws of God. Now, when the totalitarian ideas and social concepts deem themselves scientific, Aquina's arguments seem to many more valid than ever. Simply put, Thomism leads to a theory of human liberty that is entitled to distinguish between the absolute and the dogmatic in matters of faith, and firmly rejects determinist philosophies such as Marxism" ("Poland, Marxism and John Paul II", December 6, 1978). Thus, for both Moynihan and Tyrmand, the politics of our time has enabled Christians finally to rediscover their own intelligence.

The Going Public Opinion

For what is not allowed to be held as true in the contemporary world is precisely doctrinal Christianity. And this latter is exactly what Karol Wojtyla does hold and so sets himself apart from contemporary philosophies and political establishments. He is, in other words, directly related to the classical Socratic problem, to the relation of Christianity to classical thought, so well formulated by

Professor Leo Strauss, the problem of challenging the going public opinion of an era which cannot or will not admit to itself that any religious orthodoxy could be precisely true and therefore critical of policies that deviate from an absolute norm. In this sense, only the Pope seems, among our contemporaries, free enough to act on the basis of real intellectual independence, one based in fact on the truth of Christianity.

Three Groups

This position will necessarily challenge, above all, three major groupings: the Marxists, with whom the Pope dealt in Mexico and Poland, the secular humanists and the Catholic dissidents who have since Vatican II staked their intellectual reputations on a theory of change, taking its finality from the accepted moral practices or elucidated "rights" embodied in contemporary customs or laws. This is why John Paul II, again and again, returns to the theme that Catholics have their *own* sources of knowledge and truth.

No doubt, John Paul II was able to say what he has said, and say it where he has chosen to say — places of maximum publicity — because of his own extraordinary personality. If there was ever a "cult of personality" in this world, he has it, with all due respect to Stalin or Mao. "The Pope has something called 'presence'", Hugh Sidey continued. "... The Pope's face may be part of the answer. Televisions directors love the twinkle, the colour, the lines of care and certainly the vague suggestion of a linebacker for the Chicago Bears (football team)". Many, like Mary McGrory in one of her columns, point out his intense delight in and gaze on each unique person, as if for a moment, he were the only person in the world — as Wojtyla's philosophy indeed would argue.

The objections to his obviously critical challenges are, of course, beginning to come in; for he has stepped on most of the sensitive toes of our time. Almost the only theological topics he has neglected, it would seem, are indulgences and Purgatory! And I suspect he would have got round to those if anyone had been denying them.

Weakness

His strength, then, is in public opinion, that most fickle of all goddesses. He can talk as he does, where he does, because no politician in any city from Mexico City to Warsaw, Dublin or Des Moines can afford to ignore his popularity, even though he is genuinely liked for himself. But where is he weak? John Paul II, from everything he has said about the strength of the Polish Church in our time, in confrontation with what Senator Moynihan called *the philosophical issue of our time*, knows exactly wherein he himself is weak. For he is weak where people do not believe genuinely and act sincerely as united, truly believing people, obedient to the faith itself.

And so, from Ireland, Conor Cruise O'Brien chided that the Holy Father's high sounding words would have no visible effect on the Irish terrorists. (*The Observer*, reprinted in *The New York Times*, October 7, 1979.) From the United Nations, Paul Hofmann wondered about the same sort of thing: "Two reasons suggest themselves for what some observers have criticized as the Pope's 'vagueness'. First, political action — the elucidation of conduct from principles — is, he said in Mexico, the province primarily of lay people, not priests and bishops—presumably including himself. Second, few disagree with high principles. Only admonitions to to do something, or not to do it, engender resistance . . . Surely, the Pope's role as a moral guide for the planet would be endangered if large numbers of Catholics were seen to flout his authority" ("Embracing a Mission of Global Moral Authority", *The New York Times*, October 7, 1979).

Thus, the triumphant — *The Economist* of London recently (September 15, 1979, p. 34) wrote a propos of the new Archbishop of Canterbury, "Rome, in its newly triumphant mood . . ." —journeys of John Paul II need to be seen in some broader intellectual framework in which their meaning can be grasped, not the journeys, but what was taught on them.

Truth

No one any longer doubts the courage, acumen or attraction of the man. But he has done something almost impos-

sible, unimaginable; he has firmly proclaimed, before the world, before the confuters and the doubters, the indifferent, the hopeful and the believers also, the content of Catholicism in its dogma and its discipline—a theme the Pope always returns to — to be not only just one more opinion, but to be in fact true. John Paul II, with utmost care to respect the persons of all people, with utmost charisma, has lovingly defied his times.

In one sense, as Senator Moynihan intimated, the whole of the modern liberal “project” is, in fact, out-of-date and unaware of what most people in the modern world—Second and Third especially—are up against. But even those public practices and policies — often ironically called “rights”— which dominate the agenda of the self-styled democratic states must be directly challenged for what they do to human life from its beginning dignity. (Cf. in this regard Francis A. Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop, MD, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* Exposing our Rapid yet Subtle Loss of Human Rights, Old Tappan, NJ, Fleming A. Revell, 1979, for a Protestant agreement with much of what John Paul has worried about.)

The Jewish, Armenian, Gulag, Boat-People and other holocausts of our century are horrid enough, but they do not hide the abortion-euthanasia holocausts we are practising every day on our own kind. To call such a system a legal “right” John Paul will not tolerate. There are things that are God’s which no civil law can change or justify. The evil is human. Those fighting such evils had almost lost heart, in addition to losing most of the battles. They have been ridiculed and opposed by most of the academic, public opinion, and intellectual classes; classes whose minds were needed in the issue itself. The war will go on, but now with something new. The evil is defined unequivocally. And again, this is the “liberal” position. That is, it is an action against the accepted practices of the modern culture and state.

Symbolism

When John Paul II gave his Homily on Human Life and Family on the Washington Mall that blustery October Sunday, he was outlined against the Dome of the United States

Capital. As we sat down near the Altar, I noticed that the last dignitary to pass by to take his seat was Chief Justice Warren Burger of the United States Supreme Court. The symbolism could not be missed, since it has been mainly in the Courts that the terrible permission to abort our kind in this country has come about. But I admired Mr. Burger for being there; John Paul for saying what he did. John Paul has not appealed to power, but to right and human value.

As he went along, John Paul carefully sought out what was the principle issue before each group he addressed. He then responded directly to the issue. Before the civilian clad head of the US Nuns' Organization, he suggested gently that a simple habit was his wish as well as that of the faithful. He had said in Philadelphia, no women priests.

The same nun thought he did not hear or understand, so she called in his presence for women in all ecclesiastical orders. He responded with a homily on Mary, which was an answer, but I suspect if it takes a more solemn statement to settle the issue, which the Pope did not feel it would, this will be forthcoming.

To the gathered Protestant and Orthodox, he said that communion cannot come before agreement on doctrine and ethical practice. To the Catholic academic community, he defined again the source of authority in the Church and the relation of the University to it. To the UN and in Harlem, he talked of the poor, to the Irish of violence.

Basic Policy Decisions

We have suddenly witnessed to our astonishment a Pope who not merely presented Christian truth, as Paul VI also did clearly, but who has made basic policy decisions on its foundations. As he told the Bishops in Chicago, the pace will be based on doctrine and discipline. No one will, henceforth, as has been the case for several years now, doubt what the Church "holds". It is exactly here, however, that another side of John Paul's approach to Christianity becomes pertinent. Like Augustine, he clearly understands *choice*. We have been used to the figure of recent times who ceases to "believe" because of some practice he may not follow.

There has been, then, a curious phenomenon of assuming that because someone did something contrary to the faith, therefore he had to formulate some other sect or ideology or theory that would justify the action. We are unaware how unusual this position really is in historical context. But this is the way liberalism has affected the modern world in the area of ethics especially. The result is that the most important thing has seemed to be "toleration" of ideas and practices as the first good, no matter what. This is why the main attack on the Pope's performance is precisely from those who see rightly that he has rejected a form of Christianity which would incorporate as doctrine and practice such presuppositions.

This too is why it is so foolish and confusing to call John Paul a "Polish conservative", as so many do, thinking that it will reduce him to comprehensible and therefore ignorable categories. His personality has caught everyone off guard, so that he has been able at least to present what the Church stands for so that we can hear it unfiltered through ideological interpretation.

Some effort to render his teaching more innocuous has already begun. This is a *New York Times* summary: "Many Catholics who disagree with certain absolute formulations of Rome do not consider themselves any the less sons and daughters of the Church. One partial prophecy was offered by the Rev. Andrew M. Greeley, of the National Catholic Research Centre: 'People pick and choose what they like about Catholicism. It's not the image we have been used to here, but it's what European Catholics have been doing for centuries'" (October 7, 1979). Of course, "picking and choosing" was never considered, even by Europeans, as a virtue in the past. Indeed, it seems ironic that the main criticism the Anglo-Irish Catholic had for his Latin cousin is now, in principle, on the basis of sociology, considered an intellectual virtue. The effort of John Paul II, it seems evident, was to confront the pickers and choosers.

Choice

But the Pope himself, I suspect, will constantly return to his theory of choice in this context. He will teach what

the authentic magisterium has always taught, for this is, it is now clear, its real freedom.

This, too, is his first obligation and the debt he—along with the bishops and the theologians—owes to the faithful. Perhaps, for me, the most powerful statement—equivalent to John XXIII's notion of the right of the people to be truthfully informed by their media and governments—of the whole trip was the Catholic University statement that ordinary people have a right to know from their teachers what the Church does teach and not to be confused by theological speculations easily manipulated by public opinion. Only a man who knows what has been going on could be so perceptive.

Thus, the bottom line is choice. The Pope does not know if or what we will choose. It is a church of sinners, and sin is not its norm of action. What people "do" is not, in spite of contemporary sociology, the source of Christian discipline. John Paul's whole philosophy and theology magnify our created, personal dignity to do precisely this, to make our choice, to take our stance before what Christ did and taught. No pope can make us believers. No pope can keep us from being sinners. But any pope can tell us what Christians believe. Every pope can call us to repentance and tell us, as John Paul did, that we are destined to eternal life. We have, in other words, an alternative to ideology and secularism.

Sadness

In scripture, when the rich young man was given a choice, he sadly chose and turned away. The Lord let him go. If we, of the rich societies, also choose sadly to turn away from the poor, from the aborted, as we may well do, we will undoubtedly be free to go. If we do, sociology and culture will tell us that therefore John Paul was wrong. John Paul, undoubtedly, will remember the one service that he owes us, that of telling us, reminding us of the truth, the truth of the Redeemer of Man.

This year's Lenten Pastoral of the Archbishop of Cardiff says in short space a great deal that will prove valuable and helpful to many. Not least will they be grateful for his handsome and truly humble admission that the lack of decisiveness these past years on the part of the Bishops of England and Wales has "undermined" the firm teaching of the Faith.

Freedom of Conscience

MOST REV. JOHN A. MURPHY

Dear Brothers and Children in the Lord,

RECENTLY a survey of Catholic opinion was published in the Press. Some Catholics were alarmed at it, and took issue with this opinion poll. They objected to the fact that a small proportion of the thousand or more Catholics interviewed were non-practising and nominal Catholics. They had a point there, in the sense that the poll was seeking Catholic opinion. But the poll was likewise seeking information, which would be of use to the Catholic body. And in this sense the inclusion of a few nominal Catholics was extremely valuable. By the difference of opinion between practising and non-practising Catholics, it revealed how important it was to keep in touch with the Church. In every case the non-practising Catholic was substantially less orthodox than the practising. But even the practising Catholics were not always beautifully orthodox in their replies. And here again, I thought the information to be valuable. It showed us quite clearly that even though we are practising Catholics, the precious gift of the Faith can be imperilled by the secular humanist society which surrounds us. The older we get, the more we appreciate that the faith, of which we are so proud, is a gift. We can lose it. As St. Paul warns us, we carry this precious gift in an earthen vessel. Someone has said that every heresy is the revenge of a forgotten truth. Is there any particular forgotten truth which in the last twenty years has imperilled our gift of faith?

Let me start this way. We live in an age which has given, quite correctly, great prominence to the freedom of conscience. We ourselves as Catholics have always taught that the final arbiter of what we should do, or what we shouldn't do, was our Catholic conscience. But we never just taught that: full stop! We never taught that the Catholic conscience was some sort of magic black box, some sort of automatic pilot that you could switch on, and then sit back and take your hands off the wheel. If we did speak of an automatic pilot, we likewise reminded you that it needed to be serviced, and the appropriate servicing agent was the Catholic Church. Moreover conscience is not some strange intuition. It is the normal human intellect, taking in all the information it can collect, and then making a prudent, practical judgement. It is a human computer. Programme it with the right information, and it will give the right answer. Programme it with insufficient or wrong information and it will give you the wrong answer. It's as simple as that. It is a human compass. Provided it is protected, and neutralized from all false magnetic attractions of the world, all the false prophets and pundits of the media, then the needle will point correctly to the magnetic North, which for a Catholic conscience will be the Magisterium. Unfortunately as Newman himself says, "the mere breath of the world rusts the Catholic conscience". The needle is not stainless steel. It is not even steel. It is just a delicate needle which if exposed to the philosophy of a secular humanist world will oscillate and vacillate and box the compass. And don't let us always put all the blame on the secular humanist world. We have a fifth columnist within—the human will. We have always taught that the human will is a blind faculty, sitting blindfolded as it listens impartially to the evidence for or against, before it rises majestically and delivers the verdict of the intellect; 'You can do this . . . You can't do that'. In a sense this is true. But in another sense it is the biggest 'con' of the century. Long before it starts to listen to the evidence, and long before it delivers its evidence, it has been busy picking the jury, allotting time to evidence which pleases, and denying time to evidence that displeases. The will may be blind but it is by no means unemotional. I have great

sympathy with the man who said, "Ask me to be fair, but don't ask me to be unbiassed". At least he is honest. Here then is the revengeful heresy of a forgotten truth. And the forgotten truth is that the conscience is only safe and autonomous when it is properly serviced. You commit no sin when you follow a false conscience. But you can commit a heap of sins on the way to acquiring that false conscience. There have been as many crimes committed in our generation under the slogan of freedom of conscience as were ever committed under its restriction : possibly more. There were 140,000 of them the last time they took the annual count of abortions. And all because we have such an exaggerated idea of freedom and independence, that we won't service our conscience. We may not in this generation be puppets on a string, but we are strangling ourselves on some of the loose strings of our newly found freedom.

All these thoughts come tumbling into my mind as I read the opinions of this recent poll. The survey is the perfect proof of the existence of original sin, the perfect proof of the necessity of an infallible church, and the amazing proof of how loyal and true certain Catholic consciences can be, despite the magnetic attractions of a modern world. Can I end on this uplifting note ? To go back to the survey, one of the questions asked was this : "Do you agree that these days people want firm moral guidance from the Church rather than talk about freedom of conscience ?" Over 75% of practising Catholics agreed. Even 62% of non-practising Catholics agreed. Even the teenagers, well known for their eternal questioning, voted 55% in favour of firm guidance. Only 12% disagreed, and wanted more freedom of conscience. Numbers never prove anything save the mood of the day. And the mood of the day is that we love freedom, but we are frightened of confusion. And we are prepared to give up a little of the freedom to be relieved of the confusion.

If the sheep are so minded, what about the shepherds ? So frequently we too have been infected by an exaggerated atmosphere of freedom. When good Catholics have enquired about the law of the Church, instead of immediately responding with the clear teaching of the Church, in deference to a permissive age, we have given immoderate space

and time to the exceptions and the dispensations. All of which has undermined the firm teaching of the Church or, even worse, revealed a mentality which would advocate the exception becoming the norm. "If the trumpet sounds an uncertain note, who shall prepare himself for battle". There is certainly one trumpeter, one shepherd of all the faithful who never blows an uncertain note. Let him service your Catholic conscience. And please don't look a divine gift horse in the mouth. Don't ask if it is infallible teaching. It is authentic teaching, and authentic servicing. You can't go wrong. Start this Lent. And prepare the ground for this servicing with a little prayer and fasting. Can I be old fashioned enough to ask you to give up something, cigarettes or drink or sweets? There are two types of freedom. The first is doing what you like, and the second is doing what you don't like, and often the second is more emancipating. And for prayer, the Station Masses all through Lent. Look them up on the church porch. And at each Station Mass you can put on the plate the money you have saved from all your cigarettes, or your drinks, or your sweets, and it will all go to Cafod and the Third World.

Given at Cardiff on the 7th day of February, 1980, and appointed to be read in all churches and chapels throughout the Archdiocese on the First Sunday of Lent, 1980, at all Masses.

✠ John,
Archbishop of Cardiff

AN APPEAL

not for money, but for prayer. If you are willing to offer a Rosary (five decades) each day for our Holy Father, please send your name and address to the Rev. J. Brown, Abbey Mead, Hall Lane, Lydiate, Liverpool 131 4HR.

It would be a comfort to the Pope to know that every day his children are speaking to Our Lady on his behalf.

In and around Priolo on the west coast of Sicily there live some 14,000 workers employed, for the most part, by a cluster of multitudinal industrial complexes. Among them is a small community of Jesuit priest-workers. One of their number carried out a mini-survey among some of the youths to discover what they felt about religion and the Church. Here are five of them replying to two of the questions asked.

Young Workers in Sicily

QUESTION : What is the position of religion and faith among you young workers ?

ANGELO : The problem of religion is important only for those youths who have had an experience of life in community and sharing their faith together. In general young workers don't think about God or Christ, even though they are continuously blaspheming, because they give more importance to the things of everyday life, the things that make them feel alive and for which they are ready to fight. They don't pay any attention to things that have no life in them.

But if one of them discovers it is possible to have experiences that fulfil and give satisfaction, that make you feel free to take certain decisions, to make definite choices, to judge just or unjust one's own and other people's behaviour, then one can accept the possibility of guiding one's life with reference to Christ and getting involved in struggling for the good of others.

GINO : Where I work and among my friends Christianity and religion are not mentioned or considered. If there is still some form of religious practice, it is only because of tradition, because the family insists on certain behaviour. Even if you don't believe what you are doing, you accept to do it to please your mother and father.

On the other hand, everything that is tradition is rejected by the young.

PATRIZIA : Problems of religion and faith occupy a pretty small place among the young. If they had been given more space, many things would have turned out better.

In fact, youth protest is limited to a debate with itself and is not capable of taking new paths, new solutions that haven't already been tried before, even though often the same or even worse mistakes are made.

For me a real religious faith can be accepted as a starting-point to give direction and meaning to one's life and to help in taking important decisions.

But the majority of youths have rejected this line. I think they are wrong, because the Gospel is a revolutionary message in so far as it proposes new ways of living and making choices.

And if anyone objects that this is utopia, one can reply with Marcuse that "Utopia is what society denies you and prevents you from being". It is society that conditions you and makes you feel that your plan for life cannot be realized.

GIANNA : Concerning your question about the youth here, there are two main positions: that of those who belong to left-wing parties and movements, including the radicals, and who, as a matter of course, cut out any reference to faith or religion. For them, the aim is to be atheists.

There is almost a conviction that whoever admits to being a believer is cast on one side and excluded. But for me personally and for a few other youths, boys and girls, we accept as valid the position of those who hold that being a Christian does not prevent one from belonging to the left.

QUESTION : *How do the youth see the Church and what do they expect from it today?*

PIPPPO : Young workers in general have a negative picture of the Church because as an institution and structure it contradicts what it preaches as the message of the Gospel. Priests have security while the young, especially if they are unemployed, have exactly the opposite. Priests preach

humility and love of neighbour as oneself and yet they have a privileged position and lack nothing.

In addition, priests have a power which, because of traditions that still hold in many families in our villages and towns, they exercise with the aim of maintaining things as they are, that is, along a clearly conservative line. This irritates many young people because it doesn't help their interests and blocks the way for those who want to build a new society.

Young people are waiting for the Church to get rid of its pomp, triumphalism, numerous privileges, and to hand over the many possessions it has to society so that, with its prestige and influence, it can promote works and structures to meet the needs of youth.

So many youths and people are tired of always hearing repeated the same sermons, the same arguments, the same positions, not only in what concerns the Church, but also in politics.

This is why young people are so critical of the Church in general and also of those church movements which follow a certain conservative line. Often they join independent groups because there is no other choice, no other possibility of being together with others. It often happens they don't know where to go for meetings or get-togethers; they have no means or places at their disposal to come together to defend their own interests and propagate their own ideas.

Really neither I nor many others hope for anything from the Church because, with things as they are, Church and priests no longer mean anything to us. There are much bigger and more important problems such as work, society, pollution, nuclear centres, etc.

It is no longer like it used to be when the only refuge for Christian families, the only place they could find comfort and security was in Religion. So they went to church to pray and ask for grace and protection from Christ and the Saints.

But now, since people's problems are not getting solved, since Church and priests don't show themselves ready to

do all they can to meet the needs of the people and youth, no one really believes seriously in religion any more, and most of those who practise it do so without real conviction.

Also relations between priests, especially parish priests, and youth are mostly conventional because the former insists on maintaining their distance and show a mentality that is far too removed from the problems of people and youth, too different from their way of thinking and behaving. They show they are still closed and with little or no understanding of the attitudes and ideas of the young.

ANGELO : Certain attitudes of authority in the Church are badly viewed by youth because they don't leave people free to make up their own minds on personal and private matters like divorce, abortion, political party, etc. There is also evidence to show how the Church is tied up with the powerful. Christ becomes replaced by a whole series of mystifications. So I and other young people would hope from the Church, though we don't think it will ever come, a change in line with the Gospel. We want to see the Church, as was Christ himself, part of the marginalized, taking sides with the oppressed, fighting against exploitation and totalitarianism of left or right, not only with elegant speeches and documents which fill the mouth, but with positive and concrete action.

PATRIZIA : Young people want to see a Church ready to help them realise their utopia of a society built on love, a Church that gives more space to prophecy and less to institutional structures. Every time we have recourse to the Church as institution, we find ourselves faced by a structure we cannot accept because of its links and subterfuges.

The Church should rather be giving a lead and be in the front line for changing the structures of today's society.

It should also be a means for giving voice to the silent majorities which are overwhelmed by powerful and arrogant minorities sustained by violence and political corruption.

The Author of this brief article takes note of the attempted resuscitation of Stalin in the USSR and indicates what could be the motive behind it

Stalin Resurgent

- CZESLAW JESMAN

ONCE again and almost palpably, the shadow of the Georgian mass-murderer is spreading over the length and breadth of the Soviet Union. The resurgence of the cult has little to do with local politics. Yet, at Ulianovsk, birth-place of Lenin and in the local museum devoted to his memory, Stalin's portrait suddenly appeared, along with that of Brezhnev. Krushchev's has disappeared. The immediate successor of Stalin—and his principal public detractor to boot—has been firmly depersonalised. Stalin, on the other hand, is coming to life again. Stalin's effigy has been seen, too, tatooed on the back and chest of two users of Moscow's Turkish baths: these were from the *urki*; old criminal lags of his concentration camps. Not merely this, but coloured postcards of the "Great Leader and Teacher" have suddenly blossomed out on the windows of motor vehicles—lorries and buses, as well as upper-class *Chaikas*, the automobiles of the party bosses. On the international and inter-urban trains conductors sell calendars illustrating the stages of Stalin's career. This is also the subject of discussion, on the occasion of his hundredth anniversary, in such publications as *Historical Aspects of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, where Stalin is held up, along with Zhdanov and others, as amongst the "great teachers of the people".

Meanwhile, the citizens of Volgograd are said to have forwarded to the Politbureau a petition to have the name of their city-changed back to Stalingrad, with its heroic memories of the great battle that was fought there during World War II. Indeed, since 1965, Stalin has been referred to invariably in Soviet publications as one of the Soviet Union's great military leaders, towering head and shoulders above

all the rest: after the war, it was he, so they say, who led the country to glory. In Paris, a world centre of *Glavlit's* foreign activities for the past fifty years, a book by Maurice Hartmann has just appeared. Entitled *Staline*, it is published by *Editions Eclectiques* and may be said to represent a tentative apologia, quoting in support of its thesis official Soviet sources, including excerpts from the memoirs which are attributed to Marshal Zhukov. According to Hartmann, it was not Stalin who was the villain of the "period of transgressions and excesses", but Krushchev.

However, the most significant of all these scattered attempts at resuscitation was the allocution of Marshal of the Soviet Union Ustinov, Minister of Defence of the USSR. It was delivered before six thousand high-ranking officers of all branches of the Soviet Armed Forces in Moscow at the end of last year. In his speech, the Minister ritualistically intoned "Stalin the Great, leader of the people of the Soviet Fraternity of peoples and nationalities of our mighty Fatherland, and its Victorious Overlord during the Great Patriotic War" (the accepted terminology for Soviet participation in World War II). As Ustinov indulged in his intonation, his listeners rose to their feet and applauded for a full five minutes. It is worth noting that, during Stalin's lifetime, such manifestations were mandatory and punctuated all his public speeches.

None of this means that the *Vozh* or Leader is becoming more loveable as he recedes into history. His memory is just as much hated now by his one-time victims, as it was during his life. Neither did Stalin harbour any illusions on this score; he used to repeat quite often that gratitude was a disease of dogs. There can be no doubt, however, but that, during his rule over the Soviet Union, Stalin was universally, profoundly and, indeed, superstitiously feared—by everyone. And fear can be and often is used as a substitute for love. And it is understood and felt in their bones by those who have been exposed for generations to its persistent and all-pervading pressure. It could be then that the objective of the present resuscitation of Stalin in the Soviet Union is, precisely, to resuscitate this fear, a means of keeping the people of the Soviet Union cowed in face of crip-

pling economic exactions which are being laid on them apart from or, even, in aid of coming military adventures in the interests of territorial expansion. At the moment of writing, Afghanistan is not going well for the Russians. It should not be forgotten that the Soviet Union's main nuclear and naval forces are still concentrated in the North, the Kola Peninsular, between Murmansk and Archangel.

MY ROSARY

Beads slipping quietly
through tired fingers.
Ave Maria, Hail Mary.
Sancta Dei Genetrix.
Scenes of Christ and His Mother
as we pray,
Hallowing the prayers.
The tinkle of the crucifix
as it swings to and fro.
Comfort of the company
of Jesus and Mary.
Sancta Maria Mater Dei
Ora pro nobis nunc,
Et in hora mortis nostrae.

—Father J. Brown.

(To thank those who have promised a Rosary for the Pope, the cost of postage makes it difficult to send a personal reply.)

In the second half of his letter in explanation of the work of Claver House, Father Crane stresses the all-importance of the Supernatural as the driving force behind the effort at radical reform that must be made by past students on their return to their countries in Africa.

CURRENT COMMENT

Claver House

2: A MATTER OF MOTIVE

AT the end of my last letter to you, I wrote that I would try in my next one, which is this, to outline the motive that should impel the Catholic member of a lay elite to give himself to the work of influencing contemporary society in the direction demanded by respect for human dignity. This is what I intend to do in this letter, but there are some things that have to be said first by way of preliminary. They have come to me as I have set about writing the first lines of this letter. They need to be put down first. Otherwise, what I have to say later on will be out of context and somewhat lopsided.

The Need for Catholic Example

In the first place, it should be clear enough that the particular work of influencing public life in the way I am concerned with here, is not one that can be laid at the door of every Catholic layman and woman. All Catholics, of course, are called on to exercise influence on contemporary society through the example of their lives; better, they are called on to lead good lives and, in so doing, they will influence the lives of those about them. This much is sure. Moreover, it is more necessary than ever today that they should do so throughout what we call the West because society there is affected increasingly by what appears as an all-pervading secularism. Also, the society of what we call the Third World, though still possessed of a strong sense of the supernatural, appears to be at the point where its

permeation by western secularism has not merely begun, but is in process of gaining ground at an accelerating pace. No more than in the West will the up-and-coming generation of third-world Catholics be drawn from the very real attraction of a self-gratifying, secularised existence by the example of their co-religionists, so long as these seem content with the routine practice of their religion and little more. Until, in practice, Catholics can show their neighbours—in the Third World as much as anywhere else—that new and vibrant dimension that the Faith should bring to all our lives, there will be no real resistance offered to the secularist tide that will engulf the developing countries as easily as it has engulfed those of Europe and the North American Continent. Of this I am sure. The need, then, for true motivation to be given to Catholic living runs right through the Church today and across it. And the need is not being met. The proof of this is found in the simple fact that, had the need been met in the past, secularism would not now have the stranglehold it has on the Christians of Europe and the United States. You may not have seen that Opinion Poll, under independent sponsorship, that inquired into the quality of the doctrinal belief and moral practice of the Catholics of England and Wales. Its findings were interesting; in accord, if I may say so, with my own thoughts, as outlined above. The Poll showed clearly that, though doctrinal belief was firm enough, when it came to moral practice, Catholics were drifting pretty close to the secularist tide. Belief in the Trinity was firm enough; but a large majority of the Catholic young generation saw nothing wrong with pre-marital intercourse. This is what I mean. It could well be that they were insufficiently interested in the Trinity to disbelieve in it; in a sense, they couldn't care less; whereas, when the Poll turned to the intimacies of human relationships, interest was such as to bring the young particularly to the point where they were all for a boy and girl who loved each other, going the whole way long before marriage claimed them for life. The reason they thought this way, I venture to say, is that those in favour of this line of conduct had been given precious little reason why they should not do this; reason, I mean, in terms of life and love as distinct from the repetition of authoritarian prohibitions, which are most

certainly grounded in the truth that belongs to the Church, but which are unlikely to be listened to today. The reason, at base, why that recent Poll of English and Welsh Catholics revealed them as drifting into secularism is that they had been brought up to see little beyond routine practice in the religion that claimed them. So far as they were concerned—and whether you, My Lord, and I like it or not—there was, as they saw it, nothing in Catholicism that brought positive enrichment to their lives; nothing positive in its practice to attract them; no living example to follow.

Work for "the Ordinary Catholic"

I write this at some length because I do think it important to get rid of the idea that "the ordinary Catholic" at best, has little or nothing to contribute to the world about him. This is quite outrageously wrong. He has everything to contribute—in the shape of a vibrancy and a point to living that only life shared with Christ can bring and that could make "the ordinary Catholic" and his family the envy of his neighbours, drawing them, in fact, to the Faith that has given the members of this particular Catholic family such happy lives. If the "drawing" does not take place, as it does not today, this is because the vibrancy of family living which should be responsible for the "drawing" is simply not there. And the reason for this is that Catholics in the past have been deprived of the opportunity of vibrant, grace-filled living because they have never been taught the meaning (or, rather—if you will forgive the word—meaningfulness) of Grace in their lives. The richness of their Faith is unknown to them for the simple reason that it has never been revealed to them by those whose duty it was to do so. In place of the wonder of the Catholic thing—the true meaning of life shared in love with Christ—they have been given formulae of belief without understanding and routine religious practice which, coupled with the secularist drift of their everyday living, is without impact on the secularist surround within which their everyday lives are set. Moreover, precisely because their routine religious practice has been disrupted these past fifteen years by post-conciliar reforms, they are labouring still under the after-effects of a shock which has left them, as they see it, with even less of any religious point to their lives. With so

much in confusion, they are at sea now, as never before; disinclined, in consequence, to do more than hold on to the very little—again, as they see it—that is left to them. I am not blaming them at all. Why should I? It is primarily your fault, My Lord and, to a lesser extent, mine and that of my fellow priests and religious. But, at least, I think I know what is wrong. I wonder about the others. Their reaction would seem to be to engage in any of several forms of draft-dodging. The one in vogue at the moment of writing will be over when this is published. I refer, of course, to the National Pastoral Congress.

Bare Bones and not Much More

For far longer, I think, than most of us imagine the Church has got by on a basis of routine religious belief and observance enjoined on the faithful and held there by authoritarian pronouncement, but without understanding. They were given, so to say, the bare bones of the case and told to hold them tight. That was it. I am not denegrating this state of affairs, though I think it was a sad one, or looking down on it in assumed superior fashion. All I am saying is that this, I think, is how it was. It was an enclosed Church where the Faithful were concerned, itself enclosed within an increasingly secular society over which the Church had little influence, precisely because it was enclosed. The Faithful were kept safe within the laager. This is how it was. The price paid—though in no way deliberately—was the secularization of society. Concentration, I would say, was on protecting the personal and moral life of the Catholic; on holding him to observance which had little of understanding in its support. Ecclesiastical authority was strong and layfolk conformed to its wishes. In this way a form of Catholic life was preserved; in some ways very strongly. It remained, however, relatively speaking, enclosed within itself. There was a dualism which Marxists, amongst others, have noticed. The Catholic was rarely seen as one who sought to carry his belief into practice, either in terms of personal, family living or that wider field which was concerned with public life; the field of economic and social life which it was the duty of the Church to permeate with the Gospel Message. The Gospel

never got there in any significant fashion. It remained within the flock; and not all of the flock at that: for the most part the better-to-do. I think I am right here. The poor were ministered to, indeed; but the Church never really put her arms round them: she was geared subconsciously to the rising, bourgeois society of her time. And where race was concerned, her keel was for the White. Brown and Black were cared for. They did not, I think, feel part of her in any significant fashion. There was, then, no striving in practice and without compromise for the poor and the dark-skinned, even though Christ himself was both. So far, then, as the world could see and as so many of the young still see now, there was and is nothing special about Christian life and practice that takes the Christian out for Christ's sake to his fellowmen; nothing radically reforming about him, therefore, where contemporary society is concerned. The Catholic was and, I venture to say, still is seen on the whole as content to go piously to Church, whilst seeming to favour in his everyday life a *status quo* unacquainted with the imperatives of the Gospel Message, out of touch with the legitimate claims of the disinherited and the poor. True, there grew up—from the time of Leo XIII and *Rerum Novarum*—a large and impressive body of Catholic writing on the social problem as it was called. My point is that it was not seen as matched by Catholic practice. It was thus deprived of significant effect. If anything, the appearance and growth of this body of writing and the efforts of only a valiant few to give it effect, threw into stronger relief the dualism already noted between Catholic belief and practice. In the world Catholics might be. This did not mean they should not be of it—to the point where they were without significant reforming effect on the society that surrounded them. Yet, this is how it has appeared and, for the most part, continues to appear even to this day.

The Need for an Elite

This brings me back to the question of motive where what I have called the dedicated elite are concerned and which I spoke of at the outset of this letter. It is essential that Catholics should know—not academically, as you know an algebraic equation, but really, as you know what courage means when you see it in action—the all-pervading

richness of their Faith, if they are to live life to the full and draw others by their example to do the same. It is also essential that those few who are living this way and who are able and willing (there are many who are able and unwilling and many, too, who are willing and unable) should be given the opportunity of equipping themselves for the task of influencing the public life of society in the direction demanded by respect for human dignity. From these I would draw my elite; the dedicated few who are able to do this job and willing to do it. But please do not get me wrong here. In no way do I belittle a Catholic mother whose life is devoted to her husband and children; who knows the richness of her Faith and who draws on that richness to bring to her life a loving that brings radiance to all about her. I doubt whether there is anything more wonderful in the world than this. All I am saying here is that, by the terms of this letter which defines the objective of Claver House, I am not concerned primarily with this most wonderful of all influences, which is basic to all the others that are good. What I have in mind here is influence of another kind; that of the dedicated layman or woman who sets out positively to bring the social message of the Gospel into public life at no matter what cost to him- or herself. I stress this task of the dedicated layman—in addition to that of the Christian mother, which is perennial—as particularly necessary today. And this for two reasons. Negatively, because—from the point of view of Claver House—the secularizing tide is beginning to flow fast in the developing world and must be resisted; not so much by a Church that encloses the Faithful still more firmly within a wall of enjoined and strict religious observance; but, rather, by an elite, whose assent to the reality of Christ in their lives is total, whose knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching is first-class and whose members are determined to give that Teaching concrete expression in the social, political and economic life of their countries. Precisely because—particularly in the Third World—that life has not as yet reached final form, but is still in process of evolution, the opportunity confronting any dedicated Christian elite that works in the developing world is very great indeed. It is there to be taken. Taking it calls for great sacrifice. The sacrifice will be made if the motive for

making it is there within the elite. The motive can only be that of taking to men for Christ's sake that love of Christ which those who would give Him to others must first have in their own hearts. When those I call the dedicated few see the poor as their brothers in Christ, they will give themselves to them for Christ's sake and work, at no matter what cost to themselves, for a social order into which the poor will come into their own; one in which their personal dignity as human beings will be recognised and expressed in realistic concrete terms. The dedicated layman must be one who understands not academically but *affectively* what life in Christ means, and strives, in consequence, with everything he has got, to bring Christ to others. He will not be content with fitting into contemporary society and leading a good, sheltered personal life within it. By contrast, he will seek radically to alter the shape of the secularist society that surrounds him to the point where the dignity of the poorest is recognised and social and economic structures altered in concrete fashion in acknowledgement of dignity's rightful claims. Man is meant to love God. His dignity demands a shape of society that enables him to do so. Patching is not enough. Radical reform is called for. This is the goal. Hence the need for true, abiding motive on the part of those who strive for the goal. And, once again, the motive can only be the desire to bring Christ to others on the part of those who know what it means to share life with Him in love. My whole striving at Claver House is to bring to my students a true and living knowledge of what is commonly called — so often, without any real explanation — the Life of Grace or the Supernatural Life. The key is here. What they have to see is the richness this brings to their living as Catholics — the dimension it adds to their lives — so that, seeing it, they may bring Christ to the poor particularly, in themselves and in the radically reforming effort they make for Christ's sake on behalf of the poor and the disinherited. This is what motive means; this is the way it works out.

The Love of Christ

I am sorry to be so long-winded, but it is so easy, to be misunderstood in these matters. St. Paul said it all, really: "*Caritas Christi urget nos*". The love of Christ spurs us

on. Because the love of Christ means so much to me, I strive with all I have to bring Him to them on whose behalf and with whom I put out my radical reforming effort; not so much in words as in deeds, identifying myself with those on whose behalf I make my reforming sacrifice. For me, then, the doctrine which is central to all we teach and try to do at Claver House—without which, I think, the place would be a nonsense—is that of the Supernatural Life, Life in Christ, the Life of Grace; call it what you will. The utter need for prayerful understanding of this doctrine, making it part of oneself, living it, is central to our whole effort not only here at Claver House, but afterwards, as embodied in the work of past students, striving for an order of things in their own countries dedicated to the upholding of dignity. Today, this kind of effort calls for a degree of self-sacrifice made in love that can be sustained only by those who know with the whole of their being what it means to share life in love with Christ. I am constrained once again to quote from the words of St. Paul to the the Ephesians, as I have quoted them before in *Christian Order*. They are quite wonderful. They represent exactly my wish for my students :

“This, then is what I pray, kneeling
before the Father

Out of his infinite glory
may He give you the power
through his Spirit
for your hidden self to grow strong
so that Christ may live in your hearts
through faith.

And, then, planted in love
and built on love,
you will with all the saints
have strength to grasp
the breadth and the length,
the height and the depth;
until, knowing the love of Christ,
which is beyond all knowledge,
you are filled with the utter
fullness of God.”

Ephesians 3/14-19.

On this point I will say no more — except that it is central; which makes it all the more sad that, at a time when the meaning of life demands that it be understood, it appears as most neglected in the contemporary Church. Through no fault of their own most young Catholics today are largely Pelagian in outlook; what you might call naturalists; which is not surprising in that they have never been taught the true significance of the Supernatural, the reality of Christ in their lives. This is hardly surprising, for secularism has taken hold of teaching at most levels within the Church to the point where the Supernatural is rarely referred to. The accent is on secularist self-fulfilment; today the Supernatural within the Church is generally downgraded with that end in view. Small wonder, then, that, in the social field, the Church is drifting behind the secularist crowd; doing little to counter current opinion, which is giving to social and economic life an increasingly secularist form, whether it be that of the consumer society, the corporate monopoly capitalism of the West or the state capitalism of the socialised and sovietised East. Under all three systems the individual human being is depersonalised, alienated, starved of the life that should come to him, if only we would bring it his way.

Background Knowledge and Dedication

Dedication, then, is the thing we work hardest for at Claver House—the dedication of the Christ-filled few whose efforts are in the direction, at least, or trying to change the world. If only the Church would believe in them and show its belief in them by deed as well as words their work might well bear more fruit. This is what is still lacking. I hasten to add that it seems to be coming. Meanwhile we try to back up the efforts of past students in their countries in every way we can. Dedication, of course, though utterly central to what Claver House is trying to do through its students, needs to be supplemented. This is not always clear in Catholic circles. It is time, I think, that it was made clear. Without the kind of knowledge, for example, that enables a careful appraisal to be made of the factors involved in an effort that is going to be put out,

dedication can end in total failure; energy burnt up on a useless venture devoid of point or purpose. I have seen this kind of thing happen a good many times. Background knowledge has to be there if effort, however well resolved, is not going to miss the point and go astray. We try to meet this need at Claver House through courses of lectures on Catholic Social Teaching, Current Affairs, Economics, Politics and Political Theory, Industrial Relations and Trade Unionism. There is much discussion. The background given is extensive and sound. I would say it is adequate.

Technique has its Place

There is a second, auxiliary list of subjects in the shape of techniques—skills that have to be acquired if dedication, set against an adequate background of knowledge, is to express itself in effective action. Take book-keeping, for example, coupled with practical knowledge of credit-union and co-operative techniques; all three of which are taught at Claver House. Consider a past student of Claver House, back in his own country and dedicated in the way I have described above. See him in a rural countryside of poor small-holding farmers. If he works patiently and unobtrusively to bring them together, puts the credit-union idea across and is put in charge of the infant organization and in charge of its accounts, which he renders faithfully at regular intervals, he will have grouped round him in a fairly short time a flourishing credit union, which can then proceed, when the time is ripe, to further co-operative ventures. Or, take a man working with government or a diocese at community development. Under his guidance, the association he controls can be given a steady inclination in the direction of decentralization and increased responsibility for its own affairs, including the further education of its members, not only in co-operative methods, but in a wider background field. There is really no need to go on. I think the thing is clear enough. It is a matter of intelligent observation; searching out the opportunities, then taking them effectively and well.

The Record

In the twenty years of my time at Claver House I imagine I have had some 550 students from overseas—mostly from Africa—taking its annual course of nine months. There have been a few drop-outs—very few, really. There has been a good, solid middle, which it would be truthful to describe as making a solid contribution to the public life of its members' countries. That contribution cannot be measured easily; for a large portion of it is set inevitably in qualitative terms. Nevertheless, I think it would be correct to describe it as by no means insignificant. Finally, there has been and is a "top", which I would describe as outstanding. The number would be about ten per cent of the total. And when I say outstanding, I mean outstanding. The contribution made by these has certainly been effective to a marked degree.

A Task Remains

There is a task that remains and that will not prove easy to undertake or achieve. It concerns the future shape of African society from what you might call the socio/economic point of view. To us here at Claver House it seems a shame that any country in Africa should be forced into a position in which the only choice open to it is whether it be victimized by the multinational, monopoly capitalism of the West or the totalitarian state capitalism of the East. The result, in either case, is the proletarianization of its people. The thought of this we hate. What we would like to see is what you might call a co-operating, sharing Africa; a Continent whose countries are not in the grip of outsiders served on the spot by indigenous, sycophantic elites, doing well out of a system imposed on their people from outside. We do not want that. What we do want and work for is a situation in Africa in which development is recognised as being for people, not systems; at the service of their dignity, particularly that of the poor, on a practical co-operating basis, with that end in view.

You will recognise, My Lord, in the light of what I have just said, that there is much to do and a very long way to go. I can say one thing. We recognise this and know the difficulties. Here, we are not stagnant; in no way are we

satisfied with ourselves. As the years go by, we are more and more conscious that we should listen to Africa; work with it and not for it; never fall for the arrogance of supposing that we know what is best for its people. We don't. We listen—neither timidly, nor obsequiously; but simply as brothers and with a view to serving the best interests of the people we love.

THE CONFESSION

It's a month
Since my last confession, father,
Yes, my son.
I broke the window
Of Boodle and Dunthorne
With a large brick
And stole at a conservative estimate,
£60,000 worth of diamonds
And have them here
In a little brown paper package
Addressed to Mother Teresa:
Is there anything else, my son?
Yes, father, I can't afford
The postage . . .

—Frank Rickards

There is a great ring of truth about this article written by a miner's son, who is himself an electrician. His voice is fully representative of all that is best in the great Catholic traditions of the North of England.

Then and Now

A LAYMAN'S VIEW

JOSEPH CARROLL

THE biggest single event in my early life was when I was invited by our curate to become an altar server. This had to be the ultimate for me as a small boy. Going to church played such a large part in our lives then. Born and brought up in a mining village during the Second World War by devout parents in a financially poor environment when world strife was at its highest, life seemed to be centered around school, church and family prayers. My father never missed a church service when he was not at work. Sidesman at first Mass on a Sunday, he rode home on his bicycle, had breakfast, then returned to perform the same duties at the last Mass. Benediction was never missed and during Lent when we had Stations on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday nights only, he would take me with him on the other nights back to his own parish, three miles away, where Stations were held every night. Sometimes on a Sunday night the whole family would walk three and a half miles to a neighbouring parish for Rosary and Benediction and then walk all the way back. How we enjoyed those walks as a family unit. The most ominous sound to me in those early days was the chiming of Big Ben on our wireless prior to the 9 p.m. News. My father never missed a broadcast. He had fought and had been wounded in the First War and had a profound interest in the Second. No one was allowed to go to bed until after the chiming of Big Ben, for it was during that chiming that the whole family knelt and recited together the Memorare.

Altar Servers

To be an altar server then seemed a natural step and I enjoyed every service. I loved the tradition, the mystery of what the priest was doing at the sacrificial table with his back to me and appearing to use his arms and the flow of his priestly vestments to make sure that I as an altar server, and therefore closer to him than the congregation, could not know for sure what he was about. I don't think for a moment that this was his intention. I think he was so wrapped up in the solemnity of the daily ritual that he could not have altered his routine anyway. As a point of interest, this particular priest whom I first served, died about two years ago at the age of eighty. To his dying day he refused to say Mass with his back to the tabernacle.

To us altar servers in those days, the younger priests were responsible for trying to instil into us the solemnity of serving at the altar of God and the reverence we were to show to His presence by never turning our backs to the tabernacle; by never genuflecting "in plano", by always lighting the candles on the right-hand side of the tabernacle first, beginning with the candle nearest to the centre and extinguishing them in the reverse order. We were to show our courtesy to our God by making sure that our hands never touched the sacred vessels, by kissing the biretta before handing it to the celebrant because his fingers that had touched the body of Christ were about to handle a hat offered by us.

Of one thing we had no doubt, God was present on the altar at all times. We knew that by the behaviour of our learned priests whom we respected and trusted implicitly. We knew that every move we made in the sanctuary of God was done for a reason and that the manner in which the operation was carried out was just as important because we were made to understand the reverence demanded of us and that it was our job to show that reverence because we were mirroring to our Maker the feelings of the congregation we were serving.

And Fun Too

Sometimes, seeing that we were after all small boys with twinkles in our eyes, we made mistakes. Sometimes the

mistakes were hilarious. In our parish the 9.30 Mass on a Sunday was the children's, and therefore all altar servers not allocated to serve at the other Masses were allowed to be present on the altar at that Mass as bystanders. I remember one Sunday morning at this Mass when everyone had got into a knot before finding his correct place, when the server had caught with his foot the celebrant's birreta which had been left on the top step and had rolled it to the altar rails, and another server had almost dropped the missal from off its stand while transferring it from Epistle to Gospel side of the altar. By the time the celebrant arrived in the pulpit to read the notices, most of the little figures on the altar had red faces and heaving shoulders due to restrained laughter, so much so that when the notices were read, the priest informed the congregation that Masses next Sunday would be at the usual times and that at the 9.30 Mass the monkeys would again perform.

Catholics in a Mining Village

Looking back now over thirty years, it seemed that it would never change. Living in a colliery village, we as Catholics were at a disadvantage because bigotry reigned and we were jeered at and our fathers could not easily get promotion, but nevertheless we felt, perhaps through brain-washing, who knows, that we had a secret smile which nobody could wipe out. I am sure that the other people of the village were mystified and envied us that quiet confidence which we were able to convey even unconsciously. The reasons for that confidence, too numerous to cite them all, but reciting the Credo would explain a lot.

We were confident of our God and of our infallible Pope, of our priests and religious, who were ruled with a rod of iron from Rome and who would forever carry out God's wishes without question as his Church had done over the ages.

We were made confident by our little sacrifices; our communion fast from the previous evening, our attending church services when other children were at play, our abstaining from meat on a Friday—these things and others like them made us different, made us feel part of a brotherhood which was worthwhile.

Our parents were so soaked in the traditions of our Church, as were our priests and teachers, that they could confidently and knowledgeably answer our questions and guide us implicitly, knowing that our priests and teachers would give us the same answers.

Where did we go Wrong?

Where did we go wrong? Whatever happened to that stable, true unwavering Church which had no doubts as to right and wrong, which practised a universal creed and spoke a common language.

Living in a changing world, employed in the electrical industry, probably the fastest changing industry ever, in which a person must be prepared to accept every kind of innovation in the name of efficiency and rightly so, it was nevertheless, in fact maybe even more so, a great inspiration to me in my early adult life, that I belonged to a Church which would never change, where efficiency and economics were not involved, where improvements to the system were impossible and therefore not necessary. I looked forward in those blissfully happy ignorant days to having a family of my own and to enjoy handing down to them the same glorious traditions that my father had imparted to me and his father to him.

Instead of which we are handing down to our children confusion, total and utter. We have innovated for the sake of it. We, the laity, have allowed ourselves to be influenced by so called liberated pastors who are convinced that they know more than the Holy Spirit. These self-righteous priests, religious and school teachers who are influencing our children in a distorted, disjointed, disorientated, disrespectful manner and who are trying to convince us that they know best and know what is beneficial for our young people, should be taking an honest look at our fast emptying churches. I don't see the young people flocking in ever growing numbers to "liberated", free-for-all mock Masses which are totally lacking in reverence.

Need for a Bastion

If ever in these bold liberated days there was a need amidst all the corruption and immoral freedom to have

a rocklike being to which to cling, then now must be that time. Our young people, so mixed up, living in a society created by us mixed-up adults, influenced by mixed-up priests, religious, teachers and politicians, have no bastion, as we had, to which to flee in times of uncertainty and stress because they can no longer respect and revere a Church which is in no position to demand that respect and reverence.

We, the laity, have let our children down by our complacency and lack of interest. Let us ask ourselves before it is too late, what kind of Church are we leaving for the next generation?

The traditional Church's own teaching of blind acceptance to dogma is working now in favour of the progressive heretics. People of the old Church are still convinced that they must obey without argument. A few months ago while discussing religion with a friend who is a practising Catholic, I asked him if he believed in the Holy Spirit; to which he replied that he did without reserve. I then asked him if he realised that certain theologians in this country were doubting His existence and that if they came to the conclusion that they were right and wrote that particular portion of belief out of the Creed, would he accept it; to which he replied that, if he were so instructed by the hierarchy in this country, he would accept it; he would have no choice.

Time to Stand Up

Two of my daughters attend a Catholic school catering for over a thousand pupils. During a conversation one day I asked them if they knew what proportion of their respective classes attended Sunday Mass; to which they replied that they thought about 50%. In my innocence, I doubted their figures. So I asked a teacher the same question and he answered me that my daughters' reply had been a liberal one and that the figure for Sunday Mass attendance throughout the whole school was generally between 40 and 45%, and that, of those 40 to 45%, half would not continue church attendance upon leaving school.

It does not take a brilliant mathematician to work out how long it will take to empty our churches completely if this trend continues.

We are trying to teach our children a mixed up higgeldy-piggeldy kind of doctrine with no firm basis. Teachers themselves cannot agree as to the use of the Catechism. I heard the chairman of a parish council suggest to the P.P., that the benches of the church be turned sideways so that the nave could be used for dances and discos. At another meeting, I heard a teacher, also a member of a parish council, using the word democracy within the church to further his progressive arguments. Brought up in a democratic society inside the Trade Union Movement, I have always been proud of that word but I have been more proud still to belong to a Church which was a Dictatorship, that Dictator being God Almighty who allows us, His subjects, to know His wishes, indeed His commands by virtue of the Holy Spirit and the infallibility of the Pope in Rome, and not by some jumped-up parish council consisting of progressive teachers and the like.

I think that it is time for the silent laity to act.

I think that it is time to do something else besides praying that everything will turn out alright.

I think that it is time that the silent laity spoke up and stopped being so easily manipulated by so-called intellectuals.

I think that it is time that someone had the courage to say that we must go back and we must go back quickly before it is too late; for who will be left to hand down the glorious traditions of our Church after we are gone; who will keep alive the respect and the reverence, the love and the homage due to the King of Kings?

We must go back and be able to say, indeed to shout in our Credo, I believe in the Holy Spirit, I believe in the Blessed Virgin Mary, and not be afraid that next week or next month or next year, some bunch of heretical theologians will tell us that those statements are no longer true because they in their wisdom say so.

We must go back so as to be able to say, indeed I repeat myself, to shout so that all can hear, and to shout so convincingly so that never again will such things be doubted; I believe in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of sins and Life Everlasting. Amen.

In a way that he has made particularly his own in the pages of *Christian Order*, Henry Edwards reflects on the meaning of thinking christianly, the gulf between it and secular thinking, and the unhappy predominance of the latter in our own day.

The Christian Mind and the Secular

H. W. J. EDWARDS

THERE is no longer a Christian mind. Is that true? Let us see. It is almost a truism to say that the mind of modern man has been secularised. It has drifted away from what used to be thought of as its perennial leaning towards the supernatural; what exists above nature. I have at the corner of my mind the theology of certain eastern fathers such as St. Gregory of Nyssa, who were so concerned to preserve the utter otherness of God, as He Is in Himself, that they would deny the use of analogy in order to permit a certain "naturalness" in their theology; so that they hesitated to speak of supernature. If we assert that a certain weakness in man demands that we use analogy, it must always be kept in mind that the use is due to man's weakness.

Drift into the Secular

But the drift towards secular attitudes, even among sound Christians, is clear. Of course, the most obvious example is that unfortunate tractate called *The Church 2000*. Pascal, whom I am permitted by Father Crane to quote now and again, said it all very well in several of his *Pensées*: "We never care for the present moment. We anticipate the future as too slow in coming, as if we could hasten its approach". And so Pascal shows us the folly of giving up our lives to distractions in order to avoid waiting. True, he went too far; e.g. in attacking morally good plays as worse than

immoral ones because the former lull us more subtly as distractions.

This is the place to issue a strong warning to Catholics who stress the extensiveness of the Catholic Church. The third mark of the Church is her catholicity; but this does not mean mere extensiveness, which presumes missioning in time and so, with respect to the future. When one says "Catholic dogma", one does not consider whether it be so because the Gospel has spread to strange aborigines in the Amazon jungle or to the wild men of Borneo. The Church was Catholic in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. Some would urge that its catholicity in terms of extension was then potential; I must demur. What is strictly "universal" about the Catholic Church is its truth. Moreover, we run the risk of being hoist with our own petard if we consider catholicity in terms of extension; for Islam might then stake a claim. If we want to think of "Universal" as "the inhabited world", then the Greek *Oikoumene* should be our source word—a word which has run riot recently with the fad for *ecumenism*. One gets a very sound idea of all this from the words of St. Maximus, commonly called the Confessor, owing to his campaign against the Monothelites: "Even if *the whole world* should be in communion with you, I alone should not be".

Existing Remnant of a Christian Ethic

I believe there exists today the remnant of a Christian ethic, and something of Christian practice and spirituality. The Christian, even the pallid one, does grasp that there is some Christian code other than the present paradoxical amoral code of modern man (in the West and in western man's imperium of thought). The weaker brethren will observe or admit the obligations of the Church or some ecclesial body; and I must concede that some strive to pray even to a point which is so unfortunately called "mystical". But I am thinking of the Christian as a thinking being. As that, he has practically succumbed to the dated, which is another word for the secular.

He accepts "religion" not too poorly; but he lacks the Gospel view of life, the view which almost instinctively—indeed instinctively as one born again—sees all earthly

issues within the context of the heavenly. I have just risen from having read through the two short epistles of the blessed apostle Peter; and I find myself not a little bothered because I seldom think of myself and holy Church as against "the world". St. Peter did. He wrote in his first epistle: "For the time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous shall scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (i Peter 4, 18). He clearly saw all things here below in terms of God's gracious and precious supremacy and the transience of this world. To quote Pascal, "Between us and hell or heaven there is only life, the most fragile thing in the world" (*Pensée* 349). Again and again we may see examples of holy Church's abdication of intellectual authority, an abdication which lies at the back of our easy decline into thinking secularly. I read somewhere that a bishop impressed upon a group training to be teachers that the Church does not exist to give opportunity for teaching sound doctrine, but to provide communal worship. This false antithesis has in some form been almost certainly spotted by those masters of keen inquiry, Michael Davies and Hamish Fraser. True, there is a narrow field concerning strictly personal conduct which contemporary Christians have a mind to stay in. Otherwise, they tend to accept general frames of reference, which are begotten of the secular. There is now no field of discourse wherein we may move easily among our fellow Christians by trodden ways and within established bounds.

Secular Writers Criticise Secular Culture

There is much rather useful criticism by secular writers of existing secular culture and I tend to begin the list with Orwell. They have made and continue to make sound judgements upon our trumpery stuff and they show the discomfort they feel because of the values we put upon things. Examples of the books I have in mind are *The Hidden Persuaders*, *The Status Seekers*, *Organisation Man*, and criticism of our contemporary culture of the type found in *Culture and Society* and *A Mirror for Anglo Saxons*. These works pass judgements that are valid up to

a point—a point within the order of time alone; and this means that they are not really Christian judgements, even though many Christians would be thankful for such books. No Christian theology backs what they tell us. More seriously, perhaps, those who write such books are able to talk with their enemies; to engage in a special sort of dialogue with them. By contrast, a book like Pieper's, *Leisure the Basis of Culture*, despite its paper-back edition and an introduction by T. S. Eliot, is, one might say, popularly unknown, even among a reading and writing constituency of Christians. The book does not take its place within existing dialogue, save that what Pieper writes does belong to a summa of discourse within which one meets Augustine and Aquinas.

A Christian judgement on society? Perhaps the need is felt most when we meet, say, a poignant cry from an existentialist who sees no point in anything, who is, as Sartre seems to be telling us, a lost man. Doubt can be articulate. At last there is a great swell of writing upon the evils of Marxist totalitarianism. It brings to mind the liberal reaction to Jacobinism in the early nineteenth century. But, as Berdyaev wrote in his *End of our Time*, writing very much as a Byzantine Christian looking at Western Man, this liberalism sets up a parity of good and evil, truth and untruth, justice and injustice—the myth of a majority within what is called a constitutional or liberal democracy possessing the three virtues. A humanist feel for freedom of choice (not to be confused, by the way, with St. Augustine's grasp of Christian liberty) has become today almost an obsessive issue — take, for example, *The Inquisitors* by George Andrzejewski — but the Christian is at a stand against the critics and the Leviathan State. At least he should be, if he has a Christian mind. Test this. Take some matter of current political gravity; then try to conclude what you should hold upon it, detaching yourself as much as you may from any political alignment and as a Christian. True: much of political moment is neutral; e.g. the green pound or raising an import duty on French cigarettes. Then, if you have reached a conclusion, talk to a secular-minded fellow-Christian, of whom there are so many about the place these days. Do not be surprised if

you get a blank look, or, as I know, an expression of dismay.

No Time for Idealists Today

I was hostile at the start to the vernacular Mass because I had already discovered that all sorts of people really did not listen to the epistle and gospel in the vernacular when read by the priest from the pulpit. I often found this to be so with such readings as *Unto this Last*. Again and again I would ask some trade unionist how he squared the parable with, say, differentials or clocking on and off. I would always get a glassy stare or some interjection as much as to say, "What is all this about? Surely you are not talking about politics and the Gospel?" One does not have to read the Protestant modernist, Jeremias, to know that a parable must not be treated as a sustained metaphor; but there must be some relation between the parable and our day-to-day life. Meanwhile, I am ready to believe that the vernacular Mass does permit us to worship, if not to think in the sense I have considered. But, some secularist may easily say, our determination to think christianly has led in times past to bloodshed and HDQ and faggot. A short answer is that thinking christianly has enabled men and women and children to go to the stake or block or lions because they considered some principles too sacred to allow for compromise. Idealists have for too long been sneered at. We manage nicely with rogues, pick-pockets, politicians, cranks and foreigners (or we say we do), but those who insist on logically relating principle to practice, end to means, purpose to process, goal to route—for them we have little or no time, unless we happen to be thinking christianly. *There is too much to do*. It may shock modern educationists to be told that they seem to be determined on running their schools after the model set by Mr. Squeers.

It is no wonder that we have the vapid sherry party (give me my local any evening). At a sherry party held under good popish auspices one does not forget that triviality and flippancy are rules. I have been taken to task a little by one or two readers of my article on "Public School Christianity" which appeared in *Christian Order* towards the end

of 1979, though I am happy to know that others thought it had at least caught out a few. My objectors may care to read this revelation from the pen of Tom Driberg in his book on Guy Burgess. The Head of his public school recommends Burgess thus :

"It is refreshing to find one who is well read and who can become enthusiastic or have something to say about most things from Vermeer to Meredith. He is also a lively and amusing person".

There it is. How banal and trivial ! "Lively and amusing". There is another supposedly good trait, that of being "enthusiastic", though this is new bud upon old briar. Hitler was enthusiastic; he was also sincere. But let it not be thought that I am about to give Christian answers to this or that act. I do know of a very well known politician who was in the Labour Government when there was a civil war in Nigeria and England sent arms to one side. This politician, who was once a pacifist, admitted to having been greatly taxed in conscience; but he contrived to deceive himself that he could do his country good by remaining in the government. This politician insists that he is a Christian, much after the manner of Lord Soper. There is a bogus loyalty which gives many of us an emotional kick; of the kind, perhaps, that Bertrand Russell had in mind when he condemned loyalty altogether. The corruption of the best is the worst. Some years ago, a good priest hectored me because I had published a sentence or two upon a prelate who had allowed pop Masses just at the time when a Pope had sent a script to a gathering of Catholic musicians in which he deplored such Masses. The good priest told me I was being disloyal. To whom ?

Compromise and Thinking Christianity

It is a compromise which endangers our thinking christianly. Not that compromise in itself is wrong. I have in mind here the kind of compromise which pays no heed to Christian principles. Alas, it does not seem that there exists a publicly understood Christian language. To the extent that it exists, it is in the arcanum at the middle of which is the altar. The inordinate power of advertisers refers to what I have in mind. They appeal to vanity,

status, snobbery, and covetousness, which Scripture often links with sexual sin, and rightly so ever since the Chosen People committed spiritual adultery by going with strange gods. Again—and I write as a former birth-right Quaker—there were, not long ago, Christians who believed that war was wrong in itself, even if they were ready to go into the Linseed Lancers. Nowadays, people do not argue quite like that. They consider whether the “freedom-loving nations” should have the Bomb, as a nuclear war would cause such fearful damage to the entire world. I have noticed in such arguments a good case made out for the use by all the powers of conventional weapons only, not because they are nice things to have but because the tool of war would not be useless.

One common argument against me is that there is next to no need to think christianly since we are getting all over the world lots of Welfare States, Oxfam and the rest of the benevolences. A story by Vladimir Soloviev may help provide an answer. He lived in old Russia where a beggar was almost a holy man who logically blessed himself rather than the giver on receiving alms. Soloviev went out of doors one icy night, forgetting money and his watch. He met a beggar. He had no alms. He looked into the beggar’s eyes, and the beggar understood and blessed himself.

Secular Thinking on the Sacred

What I have said so far comes to this: to think secularly is to think within a frame of reference limited by the natural (or within what we call values of the world). It is to accept the worldly criteria. To think christianly is to accept with the mind all as related, directly or indirectly, to our eternal home, our final destiny as redeemed by the Son of God.

It is possible to think secularly about so sacred an object as the Sacrament of the Altar. And notice: it is not thereby wrong so to think. It is indeed right that, in the archdiocese I live in, we should have a special collection for nuns like the Poor Clares, who are now unable to go begging and who bake the breads used in our church for the Mass. The cost of living has so risen that the good souls have gone into debt. In the same way, you can think christianly about a petrol pump, by, say, considering the place of petrol and

of motor cars in the ethos and practice of a Christian Society in a God-given world. One might thereby question whether we have gone a little mad about motor cars and, for that matter, machinery in face of the delicate balance which God produced in creation. Is the machinery—call it what you will—dragging us away from our natural roots and also from the spiritual life?

It may be a paradox; but it does seem to me that, while there is a bumper crop of studies concerning the Bible, the Church, the Christian tradition and, alas, the Christian future, there is a fast ebbing stream of Christian thinking. Of course, this is plain enough. I did some of my later stint in the English army as a teacher of history to soldiers who wanted to pass what was then called a preliminary examination (for promotion); and I well remember a session upon the great work of John and Charles Wesley. Now I could have done the job in the most secular manner possible by giving the necessary facts, and analysing and commenting upon them in much the same manner as I would in tackling, say, the seven years war, which was waged when the Methodist Movement was in good progress. I found that, while this was well within my capacity, there was within me, some latent force which led me as a Christian to give what must be called *bias*. That a merely secular method would also be biassed does not appear to be so; but if we look more deeply, we must see that this is quite as biassed. For the student could not easily help noticing my neutral attitude and would find himself drawn towards a similar neutrality—thinking about the Methodist revival as if, after all, it could be given a virtual cold shoulder, which would not be fair to the Wesleys. They suffered enough of that in Dorking.

Now you could write a book about the ecumenical movement, though I wish you would not. The book would possibly be quite distant from one written by someone impelled to write christianly. For example, you might dwell on the great advantages to be gained from some sort of unity; e.g. in a possible appearance of authority and influence ("see, how these once divided Christians have managed to effect a big merger"). But, in so writing, you would, in fact, never have strayed from a certain method

better known to politicians of Big Business. Indeed, the net result of your book might not be so very different from the recent political thought which has induced us to join the European Comon Market. You could discuss such matters as episcopacy, the sacramental system, biblical authority, the role of deacons and the filoque clause in the Creed in much the same spirit as that which breathes on those who are engaged in manipulating rival claims in industry. The this-worldliness of ecumenism seems to me to be only too evident : that is to say, the ecumenists want a nice homogenous and efficient One World Church (never mind about the real and serious differences under the appearance of homogeneity) which may be stream-lined. There would be bargaining, jockeying for position, and political summitry.

Intellectual Thinking and the Secular

I must repeat : not all secular thinking is bad and not all Christian thinking is good; nor must I be understood as asserting that secular thinking about Christian matters is even inappropriate. To think secularly may be to think well or ill; to think christianly may be to think illogically, shallowly, confusingly. There must be a place for secular scholarship. But much of what is called recent religious literature adds up, however necessarily, to historical studies, textual commentaries, surveys of the growth or reduction of perennial practices, etymological studies and so on. We must not call these, thereby, bad or even useless; but it seems as if, increasingly, the intellectual disciplines of our time lie outside the theological field proper, at least in the realm of the strictly intellectual. As for bishops, it too often seems as if more and more they spend overmuch time upon administration. Perhaps Byzantines, both Catholic and dissident, and other non-Latin Christians do well in getting their bishops from monasteries, though because of the curious "slant" in so many religious houses of the Latin West, it may be as well to hedge upon our getting just now our bishops from such quarters.

One example which constantly comes to the forefront is the pother about Catholic education, which, in one present-day particular instance, is precisely the same as that about Welsh-medium schools. It so happens, at the time of

writing, that demos and conferences have taken place over the unjust increase in schoolchildren's fares, those children, that is, who attend not only Catholic or Welsh-medium, but Anglican and other confessional schools. In Wales joint meetings were held in which one was televised. I was glad to see a young relative, who sends her children to a Welsh-medium school, call for close collaboration between Catholics and Welsh-speaking folk (some of whom, of course, are Catholics) on this issue. All the same, we are not really thinking christianly on this issue. Rightly, we are thinking secularly. But we need to think much more christianly about education and put into its proper place the secular thinking about fares and dress and the other costs of having schoolchildren.

Thinker and Scholar

There is a certain peril in being virtually bombarded by scholarship. "Sour grapes, Edwards?" Oddly enough, not so. For some reason which escapes me a delightful old Welsh woman of Clwyd, who has so often in her letters called me "Ysgolhaig", is but one among some of my people who have mistakenly called me a scholarly sort of man. I am not. I may be a thinker, possibly a poor one. If I am, the only contribution I have made is to point out the use of the antinomy which lies between a contradiction and a paradox. But a thinker—bad, poor or good—differs from a scholar, though one may also be the other. Ortega y Gasset has written: "To think is, whether you want to or no, to exaggerate. If you prefer not to exaggerate, you must remain silent; or rather, you must paralyse your intellect and find some way of becoming an idiot". I am more indulgent than y Gasset; but he was on the right track. The scholar tends to avoid making a clear decision; he balances this against that; he may overwhelm you in his humility with footnotes. He asks you at best to do the thinking. Another name for the thinker is the prophet; and Scripture has called some of us to the prophetic office, according to the graces God gives us. It is true that prophets had a bad time; but St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Catherine of Siena, with many uncanonised Christians have been especially blessed with the gift of what Scripture calls prophecy ever since the daughters of Philip the Deacon preached.

Mystery and Secrecy

I know well that, if a layman grumbles about the bishops, he may have let the Devil get hold of his fingers. God chose Peter to be Bishop of Rome, off-hand, a weak if noisy man that he was to start with. God may use bruised breeds to rule the Church under Him. But it will do no good to propose for our assent the proposition that, because the Church sets a high value on mystery, we should rest content with the men who happen to be our bishops. This is secular thinking. There is a world of difference between the sense of mystery—the numinous—and a deliberate veil of secrecy in setting up a *pays légal* of nice, over-docile layfolk; a huddle of quasi-civil-servants plotting with others the next innovation in Holy Church. Of course—and it is a repetition, I know—we are all very human humans; and we cannot expect a string of beati among the clerics. But we ought to do our best to avoid “policy”, not crossing out a name because its owner has been a shade too bold in sticking up for long-standing manners in Church and known, say, for his horror of pop Masses, or looking very doubtful when someone tells him that all that has come about since Vatican II bears the seal of the Third Person of the Trinity.

Theology and Faith

Strictly speaking, the zealous pursuit of learning is no less secular than the equal pursuit of wealth. I well like that story of an illiterate Cornish Methodist who used to preach by the quayside to his fellow fishermen. Having misunderstood a text read out to him by his wife, he preached one evening upon the words: “O Lord, I knew that thou wert an oyster man”. The local vicar rebuked him some days later. But the vicar was answered: “Never mind, eight souls were converted”! I shall, of course, not be so gravely misunderstood as to be thought of as urging a sort of pious ignorance; but we do need sharply to part our understanding of theology from that of faith. And that Cornishman really was a good thinker, he seeing his Lord as the fisherman who could extract the pearl from the oyster shell.

We are happy to publish this open letter to the Holy Father by an Australian Mother and Grandmother, who is also vastly experienced in Catholic journalism. What she says in this short article is fully representative of the thinking of so many, not only in Australia, but throughout the Catholic World.

Open Letter to the Holy Father

A LAYWOMAN'S VIEW

L. M. QUINLAN

Dear Holy Father,

I PRESUME to put these thoughts on paper firstly because you yourself have asked for them. You have asked the heads of families throughout the Catholic world to tell you personally what it is they expect for Catholic families. And secondly I am putting them on paper because, from the experience of three generations of families—my own, my children's and their children's—I believe that what I am saying is what most other heads of families would say, if they had the opportunity and the inclination to make it public.

It is a great consolation to us, Holy Father, that you have made this request. It shows your fatherly solicitude for us, your awareness that we have been through a great crisis this last decade or so, "since the changes", as we simple laity usually refer to it among ourselves. Perhaps you even know that it is a subject that crops up in every conversation between older Catholics, a subject of never-ending wonder that such things could be, that the Church we knew should hardly be recognisable any more. Few have been aware, among the promoters of the changes, that we had any cause for grief. We were supposed to rejoice in all their attempts to make the liturgy "meaningful" and

"relevant" to the young, two words that we have learned to dread and detest. We have lived to see the liturgy we loved tossed aside and the young no better for what has replaced it. They have voted with their feet, like the Vietnamese who left the Communist North, and walked away from it. The empty pews in the parish churches around the cities of the world all tell the same tale.

But to enlarge on my reason for writing myself. I have noticed that there is some organising going on. Families are meeting to sort out what they shall say to you. There will be some sort of compromise and consensus. The articulate ones and the pushing ones will be heard and the quiet ones, whose views no doubt are precisely the ones you want to learn, will not be heard, or else minced into some general formula. This is supposed to be the era when the common man has his say—not to mention the common woman. But never have there been so many committees, commissions, such deeply entrenched bureaucracies consuming time and preventing useful action. The priest has not time to visit his parishioners: he is too busy compiling statistics for the diocesan office. The bishop cannot get to hear of what goes on in his own churches and schools unless he is prepared to do battle with his bureaucrats.

These things you may say, Holy Father, are beyond my sphere and my view of them is not to be trusted. Why don't I write of what does concern me as mother, grandmother and great-grandmother? With respect I reply that without a priesthood that is concerned in our personal lives, as apart from material for his liturgical or community experiments, we cannot function. We can do without a priest who has a good filing system. We want priests who are seen to be priests, who try to live as other Christs, priests to whom we can go with confidence in times of doubt or sorrow. Christ spoke with authority and not as the scribes and pharisees. We expect priests to speak with Christ's authority, not with the wavering opinions they may have picked up from the latest theological paperback.

You will understand, Holy Father, that I do not speak out of contempt for priests but out of the high regard for their office which I learned from my Catholic forebears. The true Catholic does not think of a priest as just another

man. He knows by instinct as it were that a priest is a man set apart by ordination. It is useless for him to seek to 'humanize' himself with jeans and a sweater. The priestly garb which Your Holiness has enjoined upon them is the mark of their consecration to God, their passport to the trust of the laity. The Protestant matron of a home for old people once told me that merely to see the priest arriving in his black suit and clerical collar had a calming effect on frail old patients overcome by a fear of dying. He brings with him the "words of eternal life". He brings in fact The Word, the Word Made Flesh that dwells amongst us.

So you see, Holy Father, that we are proud and glad that you have this high idea of priests also, that you have told us you want them to dress like priests and live out their days as priests. The gift once given, you said in America, cannot be given back. Believe us, Holy Father, the kind of priests you want is the kind we want also. We have never wanted any other.

The same goes for the Sisters and Brothers, those who have taught our children through the generations with so much devotion and skill. It was they who nurtured vocations, and how proud they justly were of the boys and girls they taught who later filled the seminaries and the convents. Their successors have only social experimentation of one kind or another, closed institutions, and schools largely staffed by lay persons. Thank God for the lay persons, many a parent has declared. Their faith is more often orthodox than that of the bright young Sister in the tight sweater, or the Brother who must be ashamed of his cassock for he is seldom seen wearing it. Consider what they tell our children. God did not make the world! How wrong the old teachers were who told you so! *God is making* the world! (Sister went to some Teilhard lectures and picked up a sentence or two about the Cosmic Christ.) Nor is the supernatural safe from them. They tamper with the Seven Gifts. The last has become (for children must be spared strong emotions), not the Fear of the Lord but the Love and Reverence of the Lord. Likewise they have banned the "harsh" doctrines of purgatory and hell. Original Sin went out when Teilhard came in; so what sin is there that really matters all that much? Hence the devotion of the new sisterhood and brotherhood to the new forms of

public and general confession or Reconciliation, as it is called. These were never intended to replace the sacrament of individual confession but they certainly have not helped to keep it in use.

It was the regular instruction in the Sacraments given them by good teachers in our good schools and the regular reception of them from the hands of priests who knew them and cared for them as individuals that made it comparatively easy for my generation to bring up their children in the faith of their fathers. Nothing was perfect of course; but things were called by their right names. Good was good and bad was bad. You couldn't get away with calling loose-living "freedom to do your own thing". You might not get very comprehensive sex instruction—you were expected to have enough "nous" to pick it up from biology; and there were parents who actually talked to their sons and daughters. On the other hand you were not called upon to do assignments on such seedy subjects as homosexuality, prostitution and massage parlors, as girls from convent academies have recently had to do, with first-hand research encouraged by telephone. The bloom of youth was not determinedly rubbed from the poor adolescents. What a sordid world we open up for them now with our ruthless, public, values-free sex instruction. The normal is scarcely known before it is clouded over and lost behind the abnormal. And all this at a time when it has become fashionable to educate the sexes together, in spite of their psychological as well as biological differences, and their diverse rates of development.

From all this the young are emerging confused and disillusioned. Taught to look on religion as a subjective process and their parents' standards as belonging to a rigid order now invalid, they look for something to support them in a world that grows daily more brutal and cynical. If the Church ceases to speak with a certain voice, to whom can they turn? There is no substitute for true authority and it is the Church alone that has it.

Holy Father, continue to speak out the hard truths. A softened generation needs strong teaching. Help us save our children, Holy Father. That is why I write, not just for my family but for every mother's family.

Book Review

THE DEMYTHOLOGIZATION OF HANS KÜNG

The Historical Credibility of Hans Küng by Joseph F. Costanzo, S.J.; 383 pages; Christopher Publishing House, 53 Billings Road, North Quincy, Mass. 02171, U.S.A. \$12.95. Available on order from St. Duthac's Book Service, 39 Blenheim Park Road, South Croydon, Surrey at £6.50 post free.

CHRISTMAS 1979 must have been a gloomy one for Catholic Liberals, that is for those of them who still believe in Christmas. For many of them, the Virgin Birth is a myth, the shepherds and angels are a myth, the star and the magi are a myth, the massacre of the Innocents is a myth, and, indeed, for the more radical among them, the Incarnation itself is a myth as they do not believe in the divinity of Our Lord. They believe that He *became* the Son of God by living as God wanted men to live—in this sense we can all become sons of God. In fact, what the radical Liberal means by God is no more than the prevailing consensus in Liberal circles. Whatever causes most Liberals approve of at a given time are self-evident revelations of the divine (i.e. Liberal) will; these causes will vary from "Victory to the Viet-Cong" one year to contraceptive programmes in the "developing nations" the next. The important thing for all too many pseudo-intellectual Catholics today is to be considered relevant—and by relevant they mean to earn the approval of their secular counterparts, the Liberal Establishment. Thus, the pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World of Vatican II (*Gaudium et Spes*) helped to make Catholicism "relevant" to contemporary man by incorporating some of the "insights" of the Liberal Establishment. Similarly, Hans Küng is the most "relevant" Catholic theologian because for a number of years he has been saying and writing nothing which could not have been said or written by a Liberal-Protestant—and Liberal-Protestantism is little more than Humanism with a very thin religious veneer.

Küng is *the* symbol of new and enlightened Catholicism to Catholic Liberals throughout the world. He is a symbol of the Conciliar Church, the Church to which they have given their allegiance; he is the personification of the Church of Vatican II—or rather the myth of Vatican II. As I have shown in my book *Pope John's Council*, there were two Councils—the one that actually took place and the Liberal myth which the media foisted upon the Catholic public and which, even for many who are not Liberals, has now become the reality. I have also shown in the same book that the Council must be looked at from two points of view—as a General Council, whose teaching is reflected *only* in its sixteen promulgated documents, and as an event. The Council as an event consisted of the bringing together of the principally European Liberal theologians whose activities had been kept underground, thanks to the vigilance of Pope Pius XII. They were thus able to compare notes and formulate policies at their leisure in conditions of great comfort. Equally important was the alliance they were able to form with their kindred spirits in the media who had no difficulty in building up their chosen favourites into demi-gods, the greatest of whom was Hans Küng. I referred in my book to a Küng cult (p. 270). Little of his writing had been translated into English at the time of the Council but he attracted audiences of 8,000 in the U.S.A. where he was greeted with the adulation normally reserved for pop-stars. Sadly, for all too many people a man is a great scholar because the media say he is a great scholar. Those devoid of a scholarly background themselves could hardly be expected to make an objective evaluation of the credentials of a man proposed to them by the media as *the* great super-thinker of our age, brimming over with meaningful and extremely relevant insights which had to be swallowed and regurgitated on command by anyone wishing to appear up-to-date and relevant. Thus, for the pseudo-intellectuals of the Catholic world, the real Küng did not exist. They gave their allegiance to a mythical Küng, the theological whiz-kid who was clearly invested with the infallibility which he denied to the Pope.

Christmas 1979 was, then, whether they believed in Christmas or not, a traumatic time for these people—most

of whom are not sinister but silly, and to whom nothing matters so much in life as appearing to be relevant and saying all the right things about the right people at the right time. Christmas 1979 followed close upon the Vatican decision that Küng could no longer be considered a Catholic theologian :

“In his writings Professor Küng deviates from the complete truth of the Catholic belief. For this reason he cannot be regarded as a Catholic theologian nor teach as such. Accordingly, the competent diocesan bishop, Mgr. Georg Moser, will inform the Science Minister of the Federal *Land* of Baden-Wurttemberg that the conditions for the *nihil obstat* are no longer fulfilled and that Professor Küng will be deprived of his *missio canonica* accorded to him at his nomination to the University of Tübingen 19 years ago”.

Needless to say, this decision gave true Catholics an extra cause for Christmas rejoicing—and not with any sense of triumph, let alone malice. As long as Küng was entrusted with a *missio canonica* to teach as an official Catholic theologian he and his followers could claim that his views represented a legitimate *Catholic* viewpoint when, from 1970 onwards, there was not the least doubt that he was a Liberal-Protestant, i.e. with the publication of *Infallible? An Enquiry*. In this book he rejects the infallible authority of the Church for an appeal to the Scriptures which, of course, would be interpreted by the infallible Hans Küng. He wishes to replace the authentic Magisterium of the Church, the teaching of the Pope and Bishops in communion with him, by a new magisterium of theologians. The duty of the Pope is to listen to the theologians and promulgate their teaching. By 1970, with his book, *On Being a Christian*, he was openly questioning the divinity of Christ and, when asked by his bishops to affirm his acceptance of this dogma, upon which our entire faith is built, he refused. In their statement of 18 December 1979, the German Bishops wrote :

“In the central question of Christology, whether Jèsus Christ really is God’s Son, i.e. whether Jesus holds undiminished the position and state of being of God, Pro-

fessor Küng has evaded a decisive and binding confession despite all efforts to clear this up".

There is, then, no doubt at all that Küng has not been a Catholic for a least ten years and he is probably not even a Christian—belief in the divinity of Christ is the essential pre-requisite for anyone claiming that title. There was thus every reason for Catholics who love their Faith to rejoice when he was no longer permitted to purvey Liberal-Protestantism while masquerading as a Catholic theologian. I was particularly heartened at the news, having devoted a good deal of space to the errors of Hans Küng in my book *The Order of Melchisedech*, which had appeared in April 1979. I complained (p. 20) that it was scandalous that he "was still functioning as an accredited teacher of Catholic doctrine". The fact that this scandal was corrected so soon and so dramatically gives great cause for hope.

There was, of course, much support for him in predictable quarters. The World Council of Churches stated that: "The Pope's decision could not be regarded as an internal affair of the Catholic Church since it had immediate ecumenical repercussions". This is a most interesting point of view! The supreme authority in the Catholic Church is no longer entitled to say who shall and who shall not represent the Church as an official teacher. Dr. Stuart Blanch, the Anglican Archbishop of York, claimed that Küng was a great theologian who had put the whole world in his debt in a courageous if sometimes provocative attempt "to express the Gospel in intellectual categories more appropriate to our time . . .". Clearly, he and Küng speak the same language. In an act of charming ecumenical courtesy, the *Church Times* asked whether Pope John Paul II "is going to turn out to be the Ayatollah of the West" (11 January 1980). *The Tablet's* cliché computer punched out an editorial comparing the action taken against Küng to the pattern of "life under a Communist régime", praised him as a "noble thinker", and demanded the abolition of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Fifty Swiss theologians announced that they were "profoundly disturbed . . . our faith in the Vatican is shaken". Seventy American and Canadian Catholic theologians informed the world that: "We publicly affirm our recognition that Prof. Küng

is indeed a Catholic theologian". The directors of *Concilium*, mouthpiece of the parallel magisterium of Liberal-theologians, insisted that "they did not see any well-founded reason not to consider our colleague Hans Küng as a Catholic theologian". The question of human rights was raised by many of his defenders but not one of them explained why an individual has the right to work for any organization, religious or secular, and publicly contradict its most fundamental principles. Some of his defenders stated that they did not necessarily agree with his theology but defended his right to teach it. Nothing was heard of these zealous defenders of human rights and free speech when Archbishop Lefebvre was condemned, which indicates that they are not concerned with upholding principles, but defending fellow members of the liberal clique.

One example of this support is of particular concern to British Catholics. One might have hoped that even if our bishops did not publicly support the Pope (which very few did) they would at least refrain from defending Küng. Sadly, Bishop B. C. Butler stated in *The Universe* (4 January 1980): "As a friend of Hans Küng I am naturally distressed by the misfortune that has befallen him". In what cannot be interpreted as anything other than an attempt to undermine the authority of the Sacred Congregation, and of the Pope who approved its decision, he added: "... a theologian is not necessarily sound in his thinking just because he has not been condemned; nor is he necessarily erroneous in his thinking just because he has come under censure from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—though he may have been rash and careless of the effect of his publications". There are those who would consider denying the infallibility of the Pope, the existence of the ministerial priesthood, and casting doubt upon the divinity of Christ, as somewhat more serious than "rashness"—and this brings us at last to the subject of the book under review. Sufficient has now been written to make it clear that there is a Hans Küng myth; that of a noble, selfless, fearless, super-intellectual seeker after truth with whom it is necessary to be in agreement to be taken seriously as an intelligent person in contemporary society. Father Costanzo has set about destroying the myth of Hans Küng.

The Historical Credibility of Hans Küng is the first of these books in which Father Costanzo intends to subject Küng's theology to an extremely detailed analysis. Whether he will need to write the next two after the events of last December remains to be seen. Whether he does or not, he has demolished the Küng-myth once and for all. His book proves that Küng is not a Catholic scholar, and not even a particularly good Liberal-Protestant scholar as he does not adhere to basic norms of scholarship which are accepted in secular fields. This first volume of the trilogy is devoted principally to *Inallible? An Enquiry*. There could be no greater contrast than that between the scholarship of Father Costanzo's book and the lack of it in the book which he analyzes so meticulously. He proves that Küng is motivated by emotion rather than a dispassionate desire to present the truth. Küng has an almost Lutheran abhorrence of anything connected with Rome and it is sad to note that there is some support for him in Germany with the same motivation, i.e. that he is a noble and honest German who is the victim of devious Italian machinations (although neither the Pope nor the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith happen to be Italian). Father Costanzo considers that Küng suffers from "teutonic neuralgia". He does not refer to the Pope as the "Holy Father" or the "Vicar of Christ" but as the "Bishop of Rome" or "Roman Pontiff". His writing is replete with such expressions as "Roman canon law" (not simply "canon law"), "Roman ghetto", "Vatican ghetto", "Curial policy and theology" (not "Catholic theology"), "Roman reaction", "narrow Roman theology and ideology", "not very ecumenical Romanism", "Roman-minded prelates", "Roman absolutism", "Roman mentality", "Romanizing the whole Church" etc., etc., etc.

Father Costanzo proves by quoting and then analyzing Küng's arguments that his case is indeed motivated by anti-Roman, i.e. anti-Catholic, animus rather than scholarship. Anything which Pope Paul VI did to uphold the traditional faith is subjected to the most bitter invective. Thus Küng claims that: "Against the express will of the majority of the Council Pope Paul VI proclaimed for Mary the misleading title, *Mater Ecclesiae*, which aroused great hostility

and doubt about the Pope's genuine desire for ecumenical understanding and not only outside the Catholic Church". He claims that the Pope's doctrinal statements seemed "to be party documents inspired by narrow Roman theology and ideology". The encyclical *Mysterium Fidei* (on the Eucharist), he claims, caused "great scandal" and was "tied to a textbook theology". "Textbook" is another of the trigger words which Küng employs. He considers that by applying this epithet to any teaching he does not like he has proved it to be untenable. Pope Paul's *Credo* is "a typical Roman gesture of identification without consulting the Church". Father Costanzo points out that: "On the contrary, the successor of Peter did, indeed, consult the solemn definitive teachings of the ecumenical councils, and the Roman Pontiffs of the preceding 2,000 years".

Far more serious than the crudely polemical nature of Küng's writing is his disregard for the truth, principally by suppressing evidence of which he is aware and which would tell against his case. He also adduces evidence to support his theories which he knows is suspect but most of his readers will not. Father Costanzo documents the manner in which, in *Infallible?*, Küng omits important evidence in favour of papal infallibility with which he was *certainly* familiar as he had included it in an earlier work, *Structures of the Church* (1961). He goes into great detail in documenting the development in Küng's theology from this book to *Infallible?* Although he does not consider *Structures of the Church* to be a totally satisfactory book, and points out some of its deficiencies (pp. 257 and 263), he is able to refute many of the arguments in *Infallible?* by quoting from the earlier work. He concludes that: "If by some contrivance, the authorship of *Structures* and of *Infallible?* were successfully kept from one and the same reader, this writer seriously doubts that the reader would guess that the two books were by the same author. From the same material . . . Küng draws in *Structures* a theological understanding that is reassuring to him and to his readers; from the same material, he gives in *Infallible?* an interpretation that is ominous for the Church, one that justifies his distrust and rejection of pontifical infallibility" (pp. 255-6). Father Costanzo gives specific examples of

material from *Structures* which "surely deserved open quotation in the body of *Infallible?*" but is "passed over in silence" (p. 257).

The thesis of *Infallible?* is unmistakeable and Father Costanzo points it out clearly:

"If then, according to Küng, there is no infallibility in the Church, neither of the popes nor of ecumenical councils in union and in agreement with the Roman Pontiff, if indeed Scripture is not inerrant, to whom shall the faithful turn to know the Way, the Truth, and the Life"? Küng invites all his readers (including popes and the episcopacy) to rely on the collective expertise of learned theologians rather than on a supposed magisterial authority in the Church. But the manifest evidence of ecclesiastical history is far from reassuring on this sort of recourse. The generality of heretics within and without the Church have been theologians from the days of Marcion, Tertullian, Arius, Nestorius, Luther, Calvin, the Modernists of the 19th and 20th centuries, the prestigious and non-prestigious theologians of our day (pp. 132-3)".

Some of the censures which Father Costanzo passes upon Küng are certainly severe but every censure is more than justified by irrefutable documentation. Parts of Küng's work constitutes "an untheological mélange of rhetoric, half truths and whole falsehoods" (p. 268); "He uses authors selectively to suit his purpose and omits others whose theology is supportive of ecclesial infallibility, papal and conciliar, and the inerrancy of Scripture" (p. 274); "Küng's use of ecclesiastical history is one-sided, partial, biased — whatever subserves his predetermined purpose" (p. 275).

The only possible conclusion to which an objective reader of Father Costanzo's book can come is that Küng is neither a Catholic nor a serious scholar and that no one committed to Catholicism or serious scholarship can take him seriously. Father Costanzo has, in fact, proved to the world that the Emperor of neo-modernism has no clothes. He has demythologized Küng. Unfortunately, for the trendy élite the Küng-Myth will not only remain untarn-

ished but be enhanced by what they will consider the halo of martyrdom. The very comfortable and lucrative nature of Küng's martyrdom will not trouble them in the least.

Obviously, this is a book that should only be purchased by those with some knowledge of theology who are prepared to make it the basis of serious study. It makes rewarding but not easy reading and is invaluable not simply for its demythologization of Küng but for the knowledge of the faith which it will impart to the reader. Küng can only be refuted by a detailed exposition of Catholic teaching and there can be very few Catholics, priests and bishops included, who would not learn a tremendous amount and have their faith strengthened by reading this fine work. God, as we know, works in mysterious ways and there is a reason for everything that happens even if we cannot see it at the time. I am almost inclined to believe that the pseudo-scholarship of Küng has served a valuable purpose by placing before us the superlative scholarship of Father Costanzo.

Michael Davies

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